

Reese by orphan_account

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Multi

Language: English

Characters: Eleven | Jane Hopper, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Joyce Byers, Mike Wheeler

Relationships: Eleven | Jane Hopper/Mike Wheeler, Joyce Byers/Jim "Chief" Hopper

Status: Completed

Published: 2018-11-02

Updated: 2018-11-02

Packaged: 2022-04-23 02:55:13

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,172

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Joyce and Hopper have a guest over the Halloween weekend.

Reese

November 1, 1998

It was still dark out when Joyce was awoken by tiny puffs of breath against the crook of her neck. She shifted her eyes, trying not to disturb the bundle of pink fluff, to check the time.

6:47 AM.

A deep inhale followed by what seemed to be an infinite exhale came from the other side of the bed, and the mattress creaked under shifted weight.

Hopper's hand fumbled around until he located Joyce and pulled her closer, effectively sandwiching their granddaughter between them.

Joyce maneuvered the rabbit-eared hood off the toddler's head out of fear of overheating or suffocation.

Mike had to attend some work conference over the weekend to 'show face and rub elbows' as his boss put it.

"What difference does it make if I'm there or not?" El had called Joyce up as soon as she found out her attendance was also mandatory. Another order from his boss, something about painting the picture of a perfect career man with a family. "And who schedules a conference during Halloween? Is nothing sacred?"

When Mike and El arrived at their house Thursday afternoon, the youngest Wheeler was dressed in her Halloween best two days early. Mike said she had been in her rabbit onesie ever since they bought it that Monday, and if she had it her way, she would wear it until the end of time.

At just three years old, Teresa Sara Wheeler had a strong personality that was so obviously inherited from both of her parents. The little girl with big hazel eyes and curly dark hair was unstoppable.

Hopper had expressed his concern about Reese coming to stay with them as soon as he found out. He must have asked Joyce a thousand

times if she could handle being away from her parents for almost four days.

When El called to let them know they were about to hit the road, Joyce watched from the kitchen as Hopper slowly paced back and forth in the living room. He got into it again, his nose pinched between his thumb and forefinger as he went on when he suddenly stopped and looked to Joyce with wide eyes.

“Okay, we’ll see you then. Drive safe. Love you too.”

“What did she say?”

“They’re leaving now. And Reese hopped on and said that she likes us more than Karen and Ted. More or less.”

Joyce clapped a hand over her mouth because she shouldn’t laugh at her granddaughter choosing favorites. “No.” Her words came out muffled.

“Can you blame her?”

Joyce and Hopper moved when there was still a revolving door of kids and teens constantly coming and going for movie nights and family dinners. When everyone eventually moved out, the house felt far too big and empty for the two of them.

The young Wheeler family visit about once a month ever since Reese was born. The drive from Chicago much more manageable than the trek Jonathan, Nancy, and the boys would have to make from New York.

They would spend some time with Karen and Ted, usually go over for dinner, and stayed with Joyce and Hopper. There were three spare rooms in their house. Two converted into guest rooms and one specifically for Reese.

It was a bright and colorful museum, the walls covered in artwork from all members of the family. Some of El and Will’s old drawings were showcased as well as photographs taken by Jonathan.

As soon as Reese could confidently walk, she got into the habit of

climbing out of her crib and trying to climb up into her parents' bed. Eventually Mike and El decided to let her sleep with them instead of putting her to bed in her room because they know that phase of her life won't last forever.

Which explains the little rabbit nestled at Joyce's side. She had an eventful night at Starcourt Mall. There was record breaking rainfall throughout October and it didn't let up for Halloween. They walked from store to store, Reese thanking everyone she got candy from.

Hopper followed behind Joyce and Reese who walked hand in hand to record video for Mike and El. They packed up the camcorder, which was much smaller than the one Bob had, and asked Hopper and Joyce to record as much as they could.

Hopper was very conscious of where he placed his fingers to make sure he wasn't blocking the picture but occasionally bumped into someone or something as his vision was restricted to what he could see through the viewfinder.

He sat on a bench just outside of Waldenbooks and utilized the zoom function to get a good shot of Reese. She was leaning back against Joyce who crouched down to her level and whispered in her ear as she hesitated at the sight of the extra toothy vampire handing out candy.

She marched up, got her treat, and made a beeline back to Hopper. The camcorder was so zoomed in and she moved so fast that he couldn't even figure out what he was looking at.

"Grandpa?"

Hopper stopped recording and lowered the camcorder to look at her. They had slowly made their way around the mall for about an hour and he could tell she was starting to feel it.

"You getting tired?"

"No." Reese set her plastic pumpkin beside him. "Up?"

"Well, how are you going to trick or treat if you're up?"

She stepped onto one of his large boots and grabbed at his free hand. "Just a break. Then trick or treat."

Joyce took the camera with a smile as Hopper pretended to think about it, scratching at his mostly gray beard.

Joyce hung back for a little, catching the two walk away. Hopper held the tiny bucket of candy with Reese perched on his shoulders.

Hopper turned back to say something to Joyce but was confused when she wasn't directly behind them. Reese's arms were wrapped around Hopper, her chin resting on the top of his head, and her hands tucked under his chin.

"Grandma!" She unlaced her fingers to wave at Joyce who zoomed in on the pair. "Yooohoo! Grandma!"

Hopper started laughing at the sing song way she called for Joyce and joined in, both of them waving and yooohoo-ing until the camera shook from her own laughter and she caught up to them.

She wished she could save slices of life. Not just with pictures or videos, but in a way that allowed her to step into the moment and relive it.

Joyce wrapped an arm around her granddaughter, snuggling in closer and breathing the smell of baby shampoo and her freshly washed costume.

Travel back to a different time and Joyce would have never imagined this would be their reality.

That they would all make it out and live normal lives. That the kids would grow up and have families of their own. That she would experience it all with Jim Hopper by her side.

It felt like the sweetest dream.

Author's Note:

What the heck is Mike's job? Can babies even walk and talk when they're three? What is a human child?

What tense are you writing in? Why is this so weird and disjointed? All valid Qs to which I don't have any As.